

FACTS FINDING OF THE LIBERATION WAR OF BANGLADESH: A CASE STUDY OF PUTHIA UPAZILA OF RAJSHAHI DISTRICT, BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

The achievement of independence of Bangladesh is a rare instance in the history among the independence achieving countries of the world. The liberation war of nine months (March-December, 1971) is considered as the blood-price of the liberation war of Bangladesh. The persecution or abusing the honor of women was another part of the tragedy and burning issue during the liberation war period. But the real facts are yet to be discovered in spite of many works done in this regard. The name and fame of many events of the liberation war in local areas are getting faded as those are not being documented. The martyrs who have sacrificed or lost their lives for their motherland should be identified as per their contribution. Some events of the liberation war have got controversial images in local areas as those are not recorded while some cases have been made confusing. There is a target to provide an authentic database of the martyrs and to make a document the facts from Puthia Upazila in Rajshahi district along with all the data possible to gather through this research. The collected data are on the personal identity (address, parents-spouse, religion, gender, ethnicity, age and so on), education, wage, profession, killing and killer specification of the martyrs.

KEYWORDS: Independence, Liberation war, genocide, martyr, Bangladesh.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh, as a sovereign country, has achieved its liberation through a blood stained war in 1971. A lot of casualties, persecutions, torture and sacrificing instances had taken place in that time. What type of destructions on the properties was made and how many persons were killed in the war that has been discussed in a sufficient number of publications related to the Bangladesh liberation war. Some of those publications have been covered the war related stories, casualties, incidents of atrocities and socio-economic and political background of the Martyrs.

Another problem of the data regarding the martyr is that most of them are town centric. The genocide that took place in the rural region is yet to be discovered. Very little database which is created lacks key information about the martyrs.¹ This lack of a biographic database of the martyrs is a serious dishonor to their sacrifice and it has also made the country cripple to accumulate the actual havoc caused by Pakistan.

Another, drawback of the already compiled history in the paper, newspaper, book journal, article, deeds and records is that most of them are oral history based which is derived from the people's statement. These statements are mostly given by the people who didn't keep any records. Instead of keeping records, they have provided their statement from their own memory. Memories are not accurate and trustworthy. Many of their stories are found emotionally charged and over exaggerated.²

In spite of a good number of books on the issue, still, there is a lack of proper survey to examine the

accuracy of the facts of the liberation war. Moreover, some of the facts did not get attention due to the lack of proper searching. The accuracy of the facts related to the authentic history of the Bangladesh Liberation War mostly depends on the persons who were present at the place of occurrences throughout the country. Now those persons are at their old age and a significant number of them have died. Therefore this is high time to go to those eye witnesses of the Liberation War. So, a field work was needed to make sure the accuracy of the facts of the Bangladesh Liberation War over the areas concerned. This initiative was dedicated to this target.

2. A BRIEF BACKGROUND OF BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR

The first ever general election of Pakistan was held in December 1970. Awami League (AL) won a landslide victory in that election, winning 160 out of 162 seats in East Pakistan and bagged 75.11% of the total votes cast. The Party won a similar stunning victory in the provincial election also. It bagged 70.45% of the total votes cast and obtained 288 seats along with 10 woman reserved seats out of 310 seats.³ Therefore AL was presented as the single majority party in the Pakistani National Assembly and they got total 167 seats along with 7 woman reserved seats out of 313 seats. In spite of the grand majority by AL, General Yahya Khan did not agree to hand over the power to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who was the leader of the AL at that time. With the breakdown of the Yahya-Mujib-Bhutto talks over the transfer of power, the Pakistani army launched a brutal crackdown in Dhaka at midnight of 25th March 1971. They first attacked the EBR (East Bengal Regiment), EPR (East Pakistan Rifles), police and finally unarmed people. Mujib left a message for the AL leader by telegram before he was arrested by the Pakistani army on the night of March 25, 1971.⁴ A lot of casualties and massacres took place in the night of crackdown. This situation finally shut down the way of discussion to solve the problem and it finally led to a full scale war.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is mainly a survey based research work. This survey was conducted through a structured questionnaire with alternative answers on the research area. The freedom fighters of the research area concerned were selected as the Data Collector to avail their memory and experience of war time happenings. The memory of the freedom fighter was really helpful to identify properly the Martyrs and other murdered persons of the area.

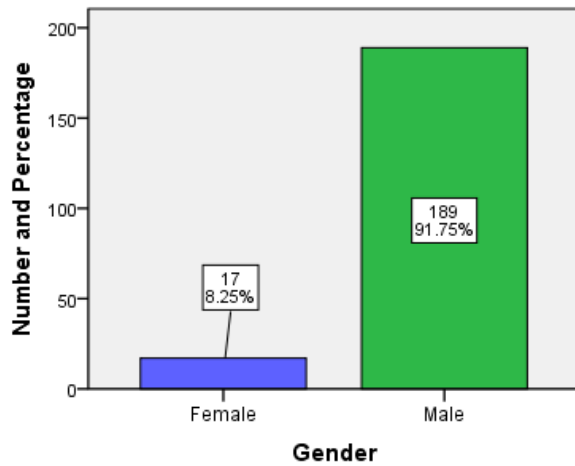
In most of the cases, there was a crowd of curious persons when someone was interviewed and in some cases, he/she had to refute the memory of some others to provide correct information. The researchers tried to cross-check the available data/information while interviewing the respondents. To ascertain the scope of rechecking the data/information provided by the respondents and to hold them responsible for the accuracy of information provided, little personal and present information of the respondents including an active Cell Phone number were preserved.

4. STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Socio-Economic Position of Martyrs

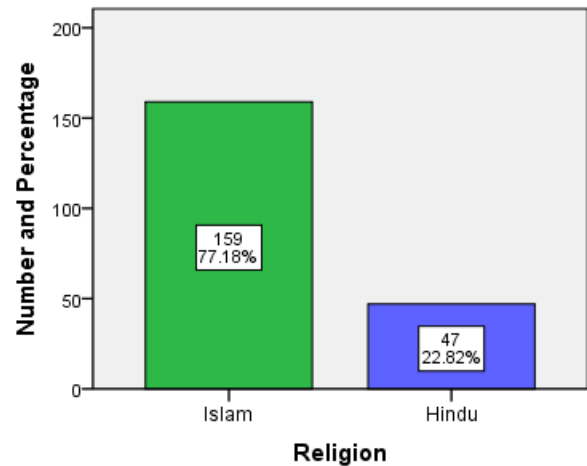
The socio-economic background of martyrs, tortured women and opposing killed persons refer to their certain status of concerned issue during the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 in the then East Pakistan. Identifying gender was important to know the socio-economic condition of martyrs or murdered persons. The issue of Gender was considered as an important factor for any kind of genocide that happened all over the world. Generally male and especially young male people are targeted by the opposite in most cases of genocide. ‘Thana Para’, which is called as village of widows, may be mentioned as an example. A huge massacre had been taken place in this village during the liberation war of 1971. Almost

all the male persons, most of who were married, of this village had been killed by the Pakistani Army.⁵ As most of the female members of this village became a widow by that massacre, the village has been named as the ‘village of widows’. This village is located in neighboring Charghat Upazila which is very close to the present research area.



Source: Field Survey, 2020

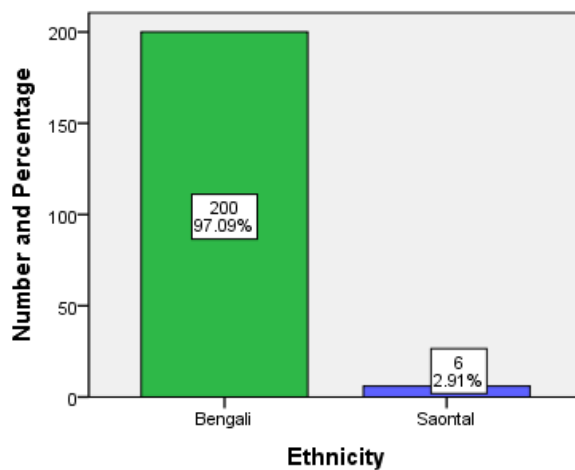
Figure 1: Gender



Source: Field Survey, 2020

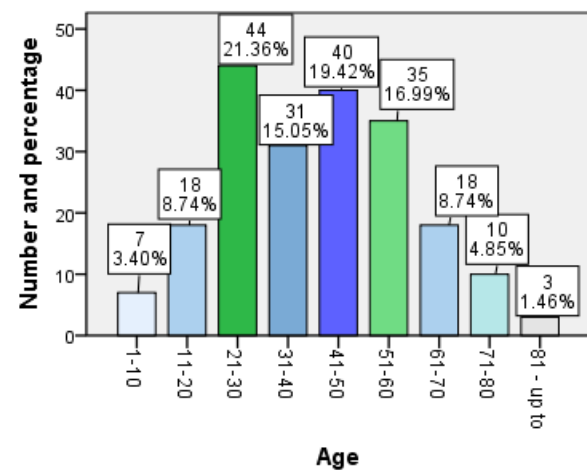
Figure 2: Religion

There was a total of 206 (189 male and 17 female, respectively, 91.75% and 8.25%) persons killed in Puthia Upazila during the war of 1971. Religion was one of the most significant variables in the war of 1971. It is widely thought that the Hindu minority of the population faced persecution mostly and they were murdered in the period of war. But the collected data from the research area is showing a different picture. The number of Muslim Martyrs is numerically much higher than those of the other religion. The murdered Muslims and non-Muslims are respectively 77.18% and 22.82% of the murdered people during the war of 1971 as Figure 2 is showing.



Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 3: Ethnicity

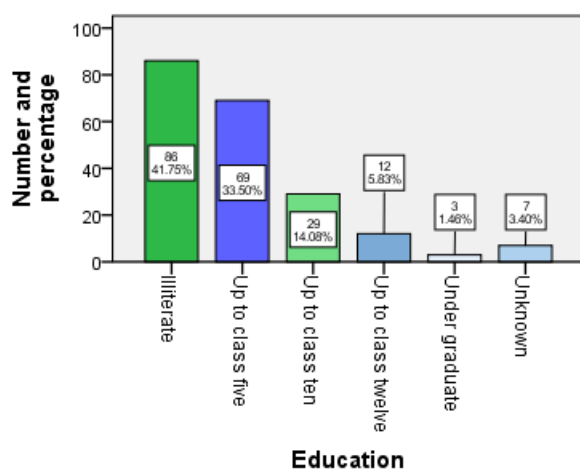


Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 4: Age

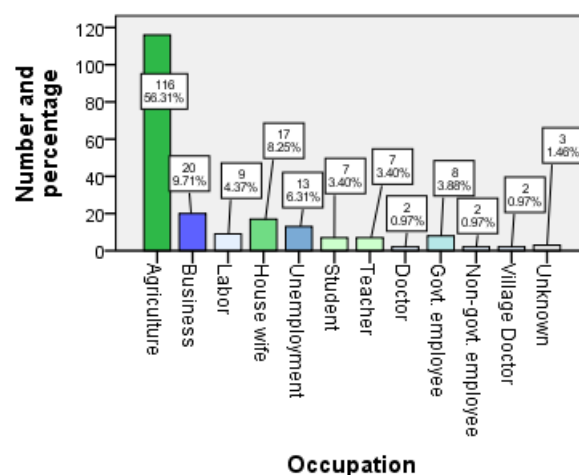
Figure 3 shows that the two ethnic groups of martyrs /killed (Bengali and Saontal) have been found in the surveyed area. The number of Bengali Martyrs/killed are numerically more (97.09%, 200 in number) than the Saontal.

The martyrs and murdered persons of the 21-30 age cluster are numerically more (21.36%, 44 in number) than the other single cluster. Out of those nine age clusters as shown in the Age Column of Figure 4, three 'youth groups' (from the age 21 to 50) count 115 (55.83%) martyrs/murdered against the total of 206. Those 115 Martyrs either joined the war or got Martyred /killed by the opponent parties of the war.



Source: Field Survey, 2020

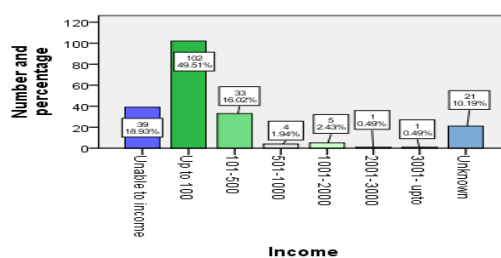
Figure 5: Education



Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 6: Occupation

Figure 5 reveals that the highest number (41.75%, 86 in number) of the martyrs was illiterate. The Martyrs were clustered into nine groups in the Education Column of Figure 5. Figure 5 shows that 69 Martyrs (33.50%) studied up to class five whereas 14.08% studied (29 in number) up to class ten. Figure 5 shows that the Bachelor degree holder martyrs were only 1.46% (03 in number). This Figure indicates in general to the low level of literacy rate of the then East Pakistani people. The declared literacy rate of East Pakistan in 1961 was 19.9% while the literacy rate was 14.4%⁶ in the then West Pakistan. The Martyrs/killed came from almost all walks of life. It means all the occupational people participated in the war of liberation of Bangladesh. Figure 6 shows that Agriculture was the profession of 116 (56.31%) martyrs or killed persons. It is the biggest sector of the professions found. Traditionally the then East Pakistan was an agriculture-based country. The second largest profession of the surveyed Martyrs was Business (9.71%, 20 in number). The third largest 17 (8.25%) surveyed Martyr's profession was 'house-keeping'. It is shown in Figure 6 that a total of 13 (6.31%) Martyrs were unemployed.



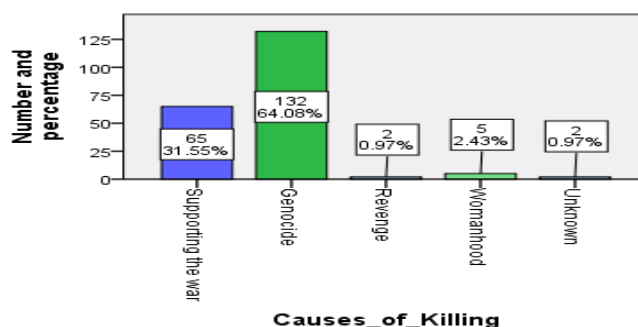
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 7: Income

Figure 7 shows that there are 39 martyred/killed (18.93%) who were unable to earn. The monthly income up to one hundred taka had 102 (49.51%) Martyrs/killed. The monthly earners of taka 101-500 were 33 (16.02%) Martyrs/killed in this Upazila and taka 501-1000 were 04 (1.94%). The monthly earners of taka 1001-2000 were 5 (2.43%) Martyrs/killed while the monthly earner of taka 2001-3000 and taka 3001+ was 01 (0.49%) each. 21 (10.19%) Martyrs remained unknown regarding their monthly income to the information providers or the persons interviewed by this survey team according to Figure 7.

4.2 Causes of Killing

Figure 8 is providing the causes for which the killings occurred during the war of liberation in the studied area. Here we find 65 people (31.55%) sacrificed their lives in order to support the war of liberation of Bangladesh in the surveyed area. The highest number of persons was killed being trapped in different genocide occurrences in the studied area and that number is 132 (64.08%). There are 02 (0.97%) persons who were killed being the prey of revenge of opponent parties and groups during the war. There are 5 women (2.43%) were raped while 2 (0.97%) unknown person were also killed in the studied area during the liberation war.

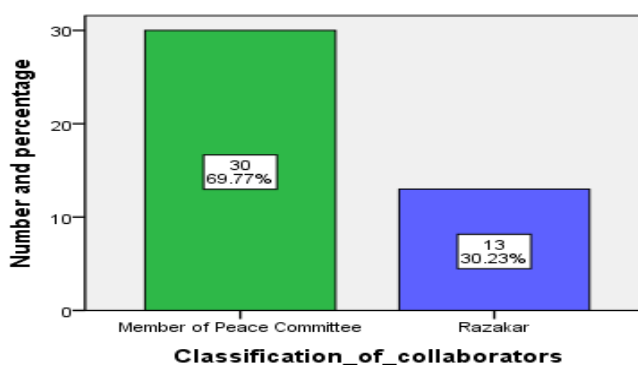


Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 8: Causes of killing

This survey was inclined to identify the war-time role and engagement of the Martyrs/killed to understand the real situation of that time. It is significant that the majority of the people who were killed were common people. They were brutally attacked by the Pakistani armed forces or allies in spite of their neutral position. That is why it can be said that the war was not only a liberation war but also a mass war.

4.3 Classification of Collaborators



Source: Field Survey, 2020 and Md. Anamul Haque, Liberation War in Rajshahi, Dhaka: Anupom Prokashahni, 2011, pp.181-82.

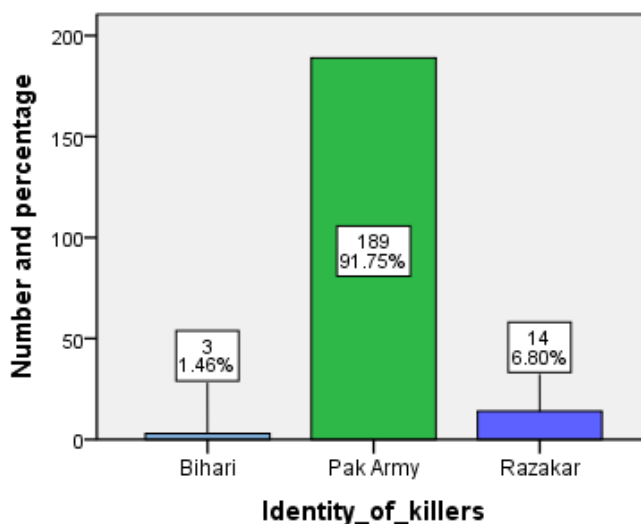
Figure 9: Classification of collaborators

There were 43 collaborators in the Puthia area. They played a role against the liberation war in different ways like providing information about the freedom fighters to Pakistani forces and helping them for looting assets of the common people. 30 of them were in the 'Peace Committee'. They were Amaj Uddin Sarker from Gopalhati village, Nurul Islam from Gotia, Ahad mollahⁱ and Ayub Ali from Tabaria, Alim Uddin from Nondonpur, Haji Abdul Hamid from Shibpur, Dr. Abdul Majid from Kathalbaria, Abdur Rahman Khan, Dr. Abdur Rashid and Amanullah from Puthia, Azhar Ali Sarker from Dononjoypara, Shamsul Haque from Tarapur, Abdur Rahman master and Md. Saifuddin from Kistopur, Khandoker Mofiz Uddin from Kanai para, Moazzem Hossen from Jeu para, S.M. Mollah from Sorisha Bari, Abdul Jalil and Dalbar Ali from Passhim Bhag, Khabir Uddin member from Sukhdebpur, Abbas Uddin, Mossarf Hossen Musa, Osman Gani, Jan Mohammad, Abdul Khaleque, Abdul Hamid, M. Kaptan, Del Mohammad, Sadakash Ali and Abdur Rashi from Bashbari village.⁷

Razakar was an auxiliary force formed later in that year by an army comprising local East Pakistanis, both Bengalis and Biharis. Lieutenant General Tikka Khan ordered the 'East Pakistan Razakar Ordinance 1971' on 2 June 1971. Later the Ansar force of 1958 was abolished and that Ansar force was transformed into Razakar Force. Md. Yunus, the President of Islami Chhatra Shongha then, was appointed as Commander of Razakar force.⁸ There were 13 Razakars in Puthia some of whom were Khazer Aliⁱⁱ, Jalal Uddinⁱⁱⁱ, Aftab uddin, Abed Ali, Sadhu, Abdur Rahman, Koashir Uddin, Safer, and Jalal Sarker.⁹

Total five persons in Puthia were arrested for being charged as Razakar and Collaborator. They were Wahed Hossen from Puthia, Salamot Ullah, Abul Kalam, Jobed Ali as razakar and Hekmot Ullah from Sarghachi as collaborators.¹⁰

4.4 Identity of Killer



Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 10: Identity of killers

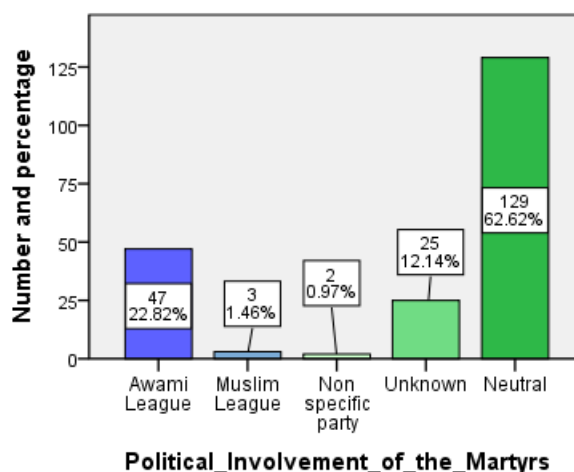
ⁱ Puthia Union Council Chairman.

ⁱⁱ Camp Commander, Nurul Islam Chairman Bari.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jhalmolia Razakar Camp.

This survey has tried to identify the killers of the Martyrs or the other dead people in the war of liberation. Primarily this research tried to see whether the killer(s) is/are specifically known or there is a hypothetic understanding regarding the killer(s) or the killer(s) is/are unknown. Here it is seen that most of the killers of the present research area were the Pakistani Army. They were responsible for 189 killings where Razakars were responsible for 14 and Biharis were responsible for 03 killings.

4.5 Political Identity of the Martyrs



Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 11: Political Involvement of the Martyrs

Out of 206 Martyrs of this Upazila, 52 (25.24%) had some sort of party affiliation, 129 (62.62%) were clearly non-political person and 25 (12.14%) had remained unknown to the introducers regarding their political involvement according to Figure 11.

But the introducers (the information providers) could identify 50 (24.27%) Martyrs with any specific political party. Out of those identified partisan Martyrs, 47 (22.82%) were from Awami League and 03 (1.46%) from Muslim League. It is significant that most (94%) of the party affiliated martyrs were the members of Awami League. It was found from Figure 11 that only 25.24% victims were political persons in the liberation war of Bangladesh and the rest 74.76% Martyrs were non political or ordinary people of the land.

5. LOCAL WAR DESCRIPTION

5.1 Wars happened in Puthia

Some wars took place in the then Puthia thana which were bloody and devastating. A lot of casualties, murders and damages took place in those wars.

5.2 Jhalmolia Bazar war

The first war in Puthia took place at Jhalmolia Bazar on 12 April of 1971.¹¹ As Rajshahi town along with the Cantonment was almost captured by the freedom fighters from 03 April to 10 April, two Divisions Pakistani army from Dhaka were sent to Rajshahi through Nagarbari for recapturing the Rajshahi. To go to Rajshahi, the Pakistani army reached Jalmolia Bazar at noon of 12 April.¹² At that time East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) were there. The EPR led by Toymur Ali tried to make

defense with light weapons for creating obstacles against the Pakistani army at Jhalmolia Bazar.¹³ But the defense was collapsed within a short time due to heavy attack by the Pakistan army. A huge massacre took place and about 10-15 common people and also 8-9 Pakistani soldiers died in that war.¹⁴

5.3 War of Loharpul of Biraldoho

After the fall of the Jhalmolia defense, the Pakistani army advanced for Rajshahi through Biraldoho. The freedom fighters took position again for making defense at Loharpul so that the Pakistan army could not cross Biraldoho. The defense was made by the leadership of Subeder Sirajuddin Lasker, Subeder Mobasser Ali and some others. At the same time under the leadership of Captain Rashid about 40 EPR along with mass people participated in this courageous effort. Side by side the local Awami league leader Kazi Abdul Awal and his fellow people tried to create obstacles on the road by putting big trees on both sides of the road¹⁵ from Biraldoho to Kalu Shah's pond. Mass people of the local area joined the war spontaneously with local weapons and they also extended their cooperation with all sorts of support like food, shelter etc. The defense opened their fire at the time when the Pakistani army came under their range. Pakistani forces responded quickly. As a result, the freedom fighters had become exhausted quickly because of their insufficient weapons and bullets. That is why they had to go back. Under this circumstance, Pakistani Forces decided to stay in the area of war for that night. At that time they got the opportunity to commit huge mass killings in the surroundings as well as damage residences and assets hugely. Many common people along with Pakistani military personnel also died in that war.¹⁶

5.4 War of Railway Crossing at Belpukur

The day after the war (12.04.71) of Biraldoho the Pakistani forces started to go for Rajshahi. The action plan had been taken again for resistance against the invaders. On 13th April 1971, a bloody war happened between Pakistani forces and Freedom fighters at Belpukur railway crossing. From a strategic point of view, the Belpukur war was very important.¹⁷ Belpukur was strategically an important area to establish continuous control on Rajshahi town. So, the final consideration of Freedom fighters was to hold control at any cost at Belpukur railway crossing. Habilder Md. Akbar Hossain, a Member of the yousufpur camp along with 25 EPR and Ansar were ready for position to make defense against Pakistani force at Belpukur. He gave the command to open the fire when the big convoy of the Pakistani army came within the range of Freedom Fighters (FF). The advanced team of the Pakistani force faced a lot of challenges and finally, they collapsed. Most of the Pakistani army personnel died. But fellow soldiers came sharply and took place quickly. They threw shelling irrespectively over the area. The Freedom Fighters tried heart and soul to hold their position. But they had to come back due to the huge attack and lack of bullets and sufficient weapons. As a result, many Freedom fighters had to give up their position. But Commander Akbar Ali did not agree to give up his position and he stood still there with a blank gun. So the Pakistan army came sharply and arrested him. They brutally tortured and finally killed him. So, the defense initiative was collapsed finally after the death of Akbar Ali. About 50 Pakistani military personnel and 12 common people died in that war.¹⁸

There were three more defense wars at Puthia which were really devastating and bloody. Huge assets and lives of both sides were damaged in that area. The spontaneous participation of mass people in those wars was really significant.

6. GENOCIDE FACTS

Genocide is the intentional action to destroy a people—usually defined as an ethnic, national, racial or religious group—in

whole or in part.¹⁹ Genocide is often a part of the war. It was one of the notorious war strategies of Pakistani armed forces in the liberation war of Bangladesh. A lot of casualties and murders irrespectively of Bangali took place through genocide by the Pakistani army. Perhaps they had the main target of cleansing the Bangali nation so that this nation might lose its dream of independence. For this reason, they planned to commit genocide in the liberation war of Bangladesh to fulfill their target. The local collaborators performed sincerely and continuously as an auxiliary force to ensure committing genocide which is one of the tragedies in the history of Bangladesh. However, the impact of genocide was multifaceted and long lasting. In spite of having no preparation for war, the common people were severely affected and some of them lost their lives, residences and huge assets. So, it is simply that they were psychologically affected and traumatized by genocide. That is why they stood strongly against the invader and provided all support to freedom fighters. Finally, the war was transformed into a mass war. There are some genocide facts mentioned in different books. Muntashir Mamun²⁰ has described in his book about only four genocide cases where Sukumar Biswas²¹ describes about eighteen genocide and killing cases. Most of the mentioned cases are based on Rajshahi city. Md. Mahbubur Rahman and Tahsina Sharmin²² has described in their book a total of eleven genocide and killing cases in Puthia upazila. The facts of genocide or mass killing in this research area are analyzed below.

6.1 Genocide at Jhalmolia Bazar

Pakistani army first entranced into the then Puthia Thana (now Upazila) through Jhalmolia Bazar. The first phase of genocide of Puthia area was committed by the Pakistani Army on 12 to 14 April in 1971. In that time some Ansar^{iv} member led by Ansar Commander Toymur Ali Munshi stayed at the Dak Bungalow of Jhalmolia Bazar. They made a defense to obstacle the Pakistani army's movement.²³ But their initiative of defense along with light weapons was collapsed quickly against the sophisticated weapons of the Pakistani army. Eventually, men of Ansar were stampeded away. Pakistani forces did arson on and threw shell at bazar place. Many common people were killed in the genocide. Some of them were identified and the rest were not specified.

6.2 Genocide at Puthia Bazar

After committing the Jhalmolia genocide the Pakistani forces reached Puthia bazar on the same day at 2.45 pm. They made arson in Puthia bazaar. Genocide was committed on 12 and 13th April in the surroundings of Puthia area. The places of genocide were Ramjibonpur, Tara pur, East Kathalbaria, Baruipara and Krisnopur. A total of 43 common people were killed in that genocide.²⁴ But the details of 36 martyrs are only found from those villages through the field work of present research. The collected data from the field work are fewer than the published data.

6.3 Biraldoh Genocide

The initiative of making defense against Pakistani forces was taken by the EPR (East Pakistan Rifles) Subeder Sirajuddin Loskor, Subeder Mobassar Ali and so on at Biraldoh Lohar bridge area after the fall of Jhalmolia defense.²⁵ Some members of Jhalmolia defense went back at Biraldoh and joined the defense. A lot of trenches (bunkers) were dug in the two sides of the road and the surrounding villages of Biraldoh. 40 EPR members led by Captain Bazlur Rashid along with Md. Shamsul Alom, a lecturer of Rajshahi Cadet College, joined in the defense according to the instruction of Captain Giasuddin.²⁶ They all together made a strong defense with sophisticated weapons against the invader. All sorts of logistic support like food, shelter

^{iv} Ansar was a paramilitary auxiliary force. The Ansar force was formed as the East Pakistan Ansars by the East Ansar Act of 1948, and officially launched on 12 February 1948 (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh_Ansar).

etc. were provided by local common people, students and political leaders. They created obstacles on the road by putting big trees from both sides of the road so that the invaders could not be able to reach Rajshahi. Perhaps the Pakistani force got information earlier from the local collaborators regarding this defense. That is why they took a strategy and advanced on the road as well as through the nearby villages. Initially, Pakistani forces were attacked by defense team. But finally, the defense lost its position and was collapsed quickly due to heavy counter attack by Pakistani forces. The members of defense were scattered in surroundings. Some of them were seriously injured. After collapsing the defense the invaders made arson and genocide in the nearby villages like Mypara, Tona para and Varora. Some common people took shelter in the Madrasa which was situated in the Biraldoh Majar in the time of war. They thought that Pakistani forces will not conduct any operation in holy places like Madrasa. But they were actually wrong because the invaders came into the premise of the Madrasa and without even giving any damn they committed genocide there. A lot of common people lost their lives in that mass killing. Some of them have been identified and the rest of them is unknown to date. As per local eyewitnesses, 150 freedom fighters were martyred in that war as well as many hundred more Pakistani military men also died in that war.²⁷ But gap between the collected and secondary data is huge. No data is available regarding dead Pakistani military men. So, they are yet to be identified properly.

6.4 Bihari Para Genocide

‘Bihari Para’ is a village, very close to Biraldoh. Though the name of the village is Bihari Para, but there were no Bihari inhabitants in the village rather all inhabitants were Bangali. On 13th April, some of the Pakistani army, who stayed at Biraldoh after occupying the area went to Bihari Para and arrested 12 ordinary men.²⁸ But our research team has found details of 11 Martyrs from Bihari para. They came back with arrestee at their shelter. The arrestees were made to cook food for the army personnel. After that, they were tortured by local weapons, spade and also by Bayonet. Finally, all of them died. Local people have claimed that this brutal mission had been committed with the help of that indigenous weapon, a spade. They were buried at Bihari Para. All of the murdered persons were the inhabitants of Bihari Para except one who came from Mymensing to his residence of father in Law.

6.5 Jaigir Para Genocide

In order to start for Rajshahi, a group of Pakistani army started their journey from Biraldoh on 13th April. They came to Jaigir Para which is near to ‘Shibpur Hut’ early in the morning. They killed four persons there without any reason. A man who was a victim in that attack but luckily he could escape with two bullets. But his father lost his life in spite of being hid in the burial ground.

6.6 Roghurampur Genocide

The Pakistani Army committed genocide in the same day at Roghura village which is situated in the southern part of Shibpur Hat. A total of six ordinary men were killed in the village.

6.7 Baneswar Genocide

The Pakistani army reached at Baneshwar Bazar in the morning of 13th April.²⁹ That day was the day of *hat*.^v Meanwhile, some people came to the hat. At first, the Army shot the local Chairman of Baneswar Union Council and he died on the spot. Later, sixteen more men were brutally killed.

^v organized twice in a week for buying and selling goods in specific area.

6.8 Belpukuria Rail Crossing Genocide

Pakistani Army force advanced towards Rajshahi after committing the genocide of Sordoh and Charghat (Charghat Upazila), through Baneshwar on 13th April. At that time the defense were organized by the leadership of EPR member Abdul Gani at Belpukuria along with the Police, Ansar, Mujahid and common people. They took the position and waited for the enemies to come. When invaders entranced into the defense area they started firing. As a result, a lot of casualties and damages took place on the Pakistani side. But the response came from the Pak army within a very short time, because they were more powerful with enough soldiers and sophisticated weapons than the imagination of the defenders. The situation changed sharply and went in the favour of the Pakistani side and the defense finally broke up. The defenders became stamped and scattered from their position due to a heavy attack. Twelve warriors had lost their lives for their motherland. Among them, seven martyrs were EPR personnel and the rest five were civilian. There is a gap of information between the two literatures regarding the leadership of the defense and casualties. According to Professor Mahbubur Rahman EPR Subader Akbar was the commander in the war and he had been coughed, tortured and finally killed by the offenders. The EPR member Md. Abdul Gani along with other warriors were scattered from the battlefield.³⁰ But according to the Writer Mr. Md. Anamul Haque, EPR member Abdul Gani was the commander and he died on the battlefield.³¹ It is found through a cross-check of facts that EPR Subader Akbar was the Commander of that war. The respondents of the present research claimed that five or more Pak military and two more EPRs had died in that war. Mahtab Ali, who was neutral but was shot dead by the freedom fighters at the war accidentally.

6.9 Killing at Dhadhais

Pakistani Army started their advancement again after collapsing the defense through the surrounding villages of Belpukria. Dhadhas was one of the villages which had suffered a lot from the attacks of the Pak Army. Two inhabitants of that village were killed.

6.10 Killing at Belpukur

Pakistani army came into Belpukur village and started firing, where three local people died.

6.11 West Jamira Killing

The Pakistani Army came to west Jamira village and committed a brutal killing against the villagers though they were neutral people.

6.12 Genocide at Varara Village

Vatara killing took place on 17th May which was one of the notorious sign of cruelty of Pakistani Army along with local collaborators in the research area. Most of the inhabitants of the village were Hindu minority. On the mentioned day the Pak forces and their collaborators, Rajakar^{vi} came to the village in order to form a *Shanti*^{vii} committee. The local Union Council Chairman Moju Haji was assigned for the mission. They called upon the villagers to attend and the most of the inhabitants came in the specific location. The event initiators tied some of the attendees up where most of them were Hindu. Pak army took them to the bank of Local River and killed them through brushfire.³² But the fact was a bit different.

^{vi} An auxiliary force formed later in the year by the army comprising local East Pakistanis both Bengali and Bihari.

^{vii} Peace Committee or Shanti Committee, was one of several committees formed in East Pakistan in 1971 by the Pakistan Army to aid its efforts in crushing the rebellion for Bangladesh independence.

Because few of them were Muslims which is ensured by the eyewitness of this case. The local collaborators influenced the Pak army to commit the mass killing because of their hate against the Hindus and also in order to loot the assets of these people. Few of the respondents of the present research think that Moju Haji was not an actual culprit. He did that misdeed being pressurized. But it is a partial view. It can be said that history will endorse against him. Somebody claimed that 30 people were killed in that genocide. But the difference has been found regarding the number of martyrs. The researcher has got total 19 Martyrs' detail through the field survey.

6.13 Killing of Poshchimbag (West Part) Village

At the very last moment of the liberation war, the invaders had committed the genocide in the Pashchimbag village on 13th December. A Rajakar leader Md. Musa (already been punished by the International War Crime Tribunal of Bangladesh) inspired and influenced them to attack the village. Four neutral men had been killed by the fire of arms.

6.14 Killing at Puthia Bus Stand Area

According to an eyewitness a mass killing took place at the Bus Stand area which was one kilometer far from the Bus Stand and in the present time it is known as Jaker Monjil. Many men were killed but none of them were buried at that time rather the foxes and dogs ate those dead bodies. This place is not identified yet.

6.15 Killing at Sukhdevpur Culvert

Two brothers Adam and Zafar, both handicapped, had been caught and slaughtered by the Pak Army at the culvert which was the entry point of Sukhdevpur village from Gotia. This place is not identified yet.

6.16 Kathalbaria Killing

Md. Omer Ali Mridha Oni, his two sons, wife, daughter and his brother Azhar Ali hid in the stench at residence of Omar Ali. Pak Army brush fired on them. All of them died except Azhar Ali.

7. PERSECUTION AND RAPE CASE

The women-torture or abusing the honor of women was also a tragic and important issue during the liberation war. Committing rape and persecution on women is one of the notorious strategies against an enemy in war. Pakistani forces along with their allies did commit many persecution and rape in the present study area. The victims try to cover up those incidents to protect their own and family honor. Thus the facts of persecution could not uncover. Only a few victims have disclosed their ill fated experience. In most cases, the eye witnesses describe the facts. In those cases, there is a bit of chance of fabrication about the fact. It was very tough to cross-check the rape and persecution facts. The tendency of ignoring the facts related to rape and persecution has been recognized by society.

The researchers have found only three cases regarding the persecution and sexual harassment in the present research area. Two of them are Asura Begum and Sufia Begum from Senbag village were persecuted and sexually harassed by jointly Bihari and Pakistani army where Mst. Sanuara from Belpukur had been sexually harassed and persecuted by the Pakistani army in their residence.

Some cases of persecution and sexual violation are found in the literature on the liberation war of Puthia Upazila. Feroza Begum, daughter in-law of Nazrul Islam, was an inhabitant of Nondarpur of Puthia. She was going to her parent's house on the month April due to threats by local Razakars. She was captured from the way and persecuted.³³ Some Muslim

and Hindu woman were victimized by Pakistani forces and their allies in the premise of Govinada Mandir. They were not agreed to share their bad experiences because of the issue of their social honor and dignity. The wife of Prodif Kundu was victimized in persecution in spite of her pregnancy by Pakistani army. Even they attempted to rape her.³⁴ But Guru Pad Saha, who was one of the eye witnesses of that time, differs on the incident. He said the Pakistani army committed rape in the residence of Kundu, Das and others.³⁵ It is commonly thought that the women of the Hindu community were the main target of the Pakistani army in terms of persecution. The accuracy of this type of statement was found at Puthia. On 21 April 1971 Pakistani Army came at Puthia Bazar under the leadership of Major Sherwani. They caught two young ladies along with their brother from the residence of Anil Choudhury, who belonged to a reputed family. All of them were the son and daughter of Anil Choudhury. His son was freed after a while. They brought back two young girls on 22nd April after persecution and rape. Moreover, the wives of Kanai Das and Deependra Nath Pal Debu were also victimized in rape by the Pakistani army.³⁶

8. CONCLUSIONS

According to the finding of the survey conducted in the study are, in terms of killing males has outnumbered the female. Pakistanis have killed males 11 times for than females. On the other hand, in the context of religion, both Hindus and Muslims were killed at the same rate. Since Muslims were the majority back then and Hindus were low in number in comparison with the Muslims, the proportion of the finding tells that, homicide was taken place equally upon this two. Ethnic communities were not out of the killing as well. Youths were the primary target of the Pakistani military, since half of the martyrs were from the age group of 21-50. Another fact about the killing that took place in the liberation war, most of the dead people were illiterate. From the perspective of profession, half the martyrs were poor farmers. During the research, the researcher failed to trace any special cause of the killing. Therefore according to the response, it can be argued that the killing that took place in Bangladesh during the liberation war in 1971 was clear genocide.

The liberation war of 1971 was undoubtedly a historical glorious event and achievement for Bangladesh. Every part of the event is really significant and that should be preserved properly. After fifty years of independence of Bangladesh, the war related facts and data is going to fade away. So, it is high time to concentrate on this work. In order to do this work, the research has been completed. It has been tried to collect, compile and preserve the names and detail of the martyrs and also the persecution and war related facts for the cause of victory in the liberation war of Bangladesh in a recognized method of social science research to bit contribute for preparing a complete local history of independence of Bangladesh. Sufficient data have been gathered which will be contributing to enrich the history of the liberation war of Bangladesh.

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